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PAMPHLET
FILE

**The
Eastern
Virginia**

**Powhatan
Confederate**

**Algonquin
Speaking**

**American
Indian**

**Yesterday
Today &
Tomorrow**

The contents of this
book are factual.
It gives us the opportunity
to enlighten you as well as
share our proud
ancestry.

PART I



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**Remit to:
The Upper Mattaponi
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23086**

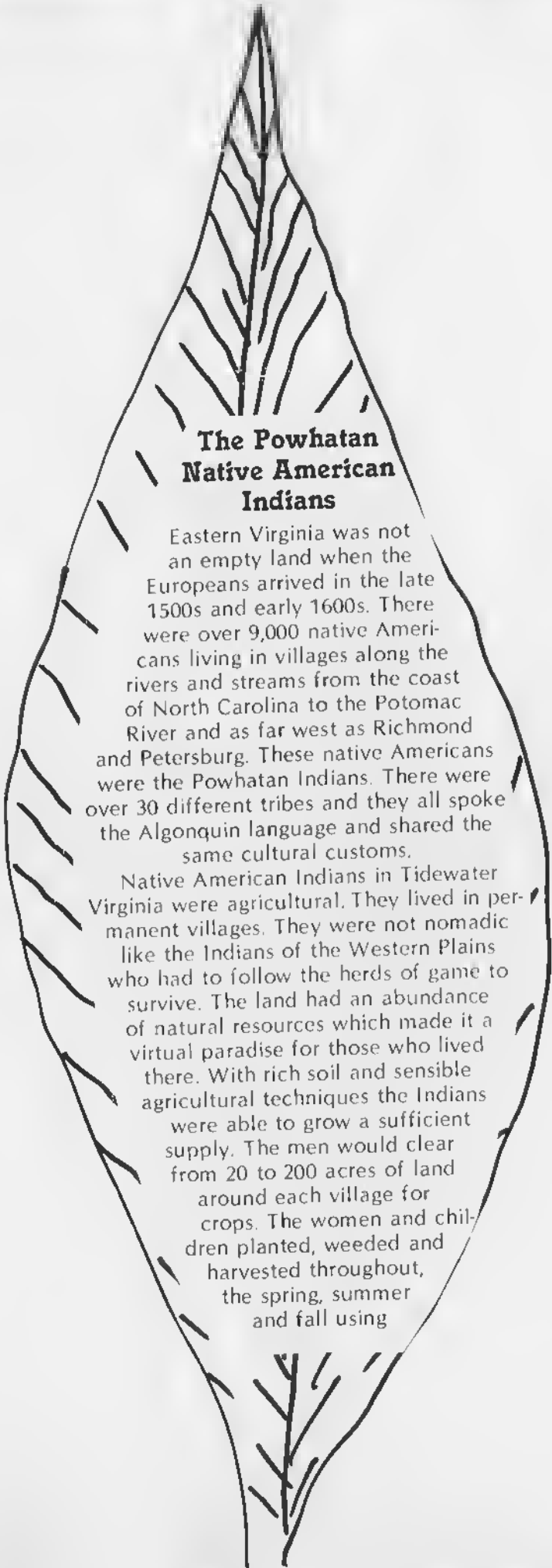
This booklet has
been made possible
through the joint efforts
of
Shirley McCowan
and
Raymond S. Adams
(cousins).

Shirley is descendant of
the Mattaponi Reservation
on her father's side and
the Upper Mattaponi
on her mother's side.

Raymond is descendant of
both parents having been
Upper Mattaponi, to whom
this booklet is dedicated.

Mamie B. Adams
12-06-16 - 4-12-84

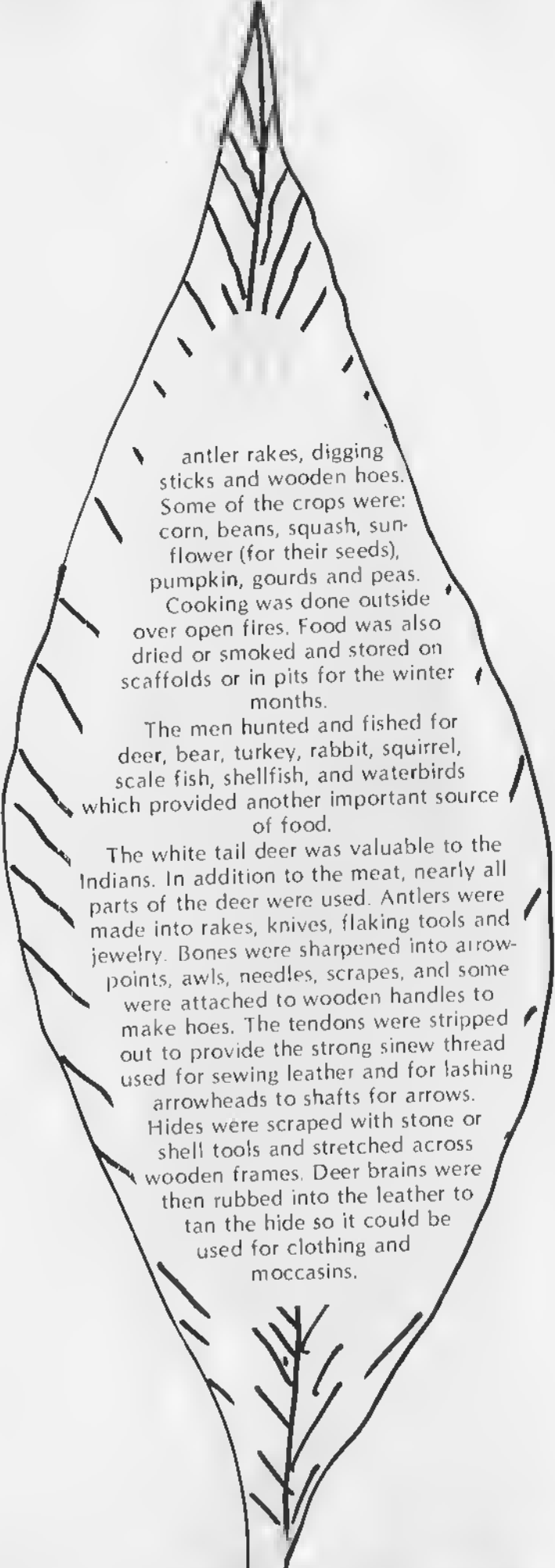
James L. Adams
9-18-15 - 10-6-86



The Powhatan Native American Indians

Eastern Virginia was not an empty land when the Europeans arrived in the late 1500s and early 1600s. There were over 9,000 native Americans living in villages along the rivers and streams from the coast of North Carolina to the Potomac River and as far west as Richmond and Petersburg. These native Americans were the Powhatan Indians. There were over 30 different tribes and they all spoke the Algonquin language and shared the same cultural customs.

Native American Indians in Tidewater Virginia were agricultural. They lived in permanent villages. They were not nomadic like the Indians of the Western Plains who had to follow the herds of game to survive. The land had an abundance of natural resources which made it a virtual paradise for those who lived there. With rich soil and sensible agricultural techniques the Indians were able to grow a sufficient supply. The men would clear from 20 to 200 acres of land around each village for crops. The women and children planted, weeded and harvested throughout, the spring, summer and fall using

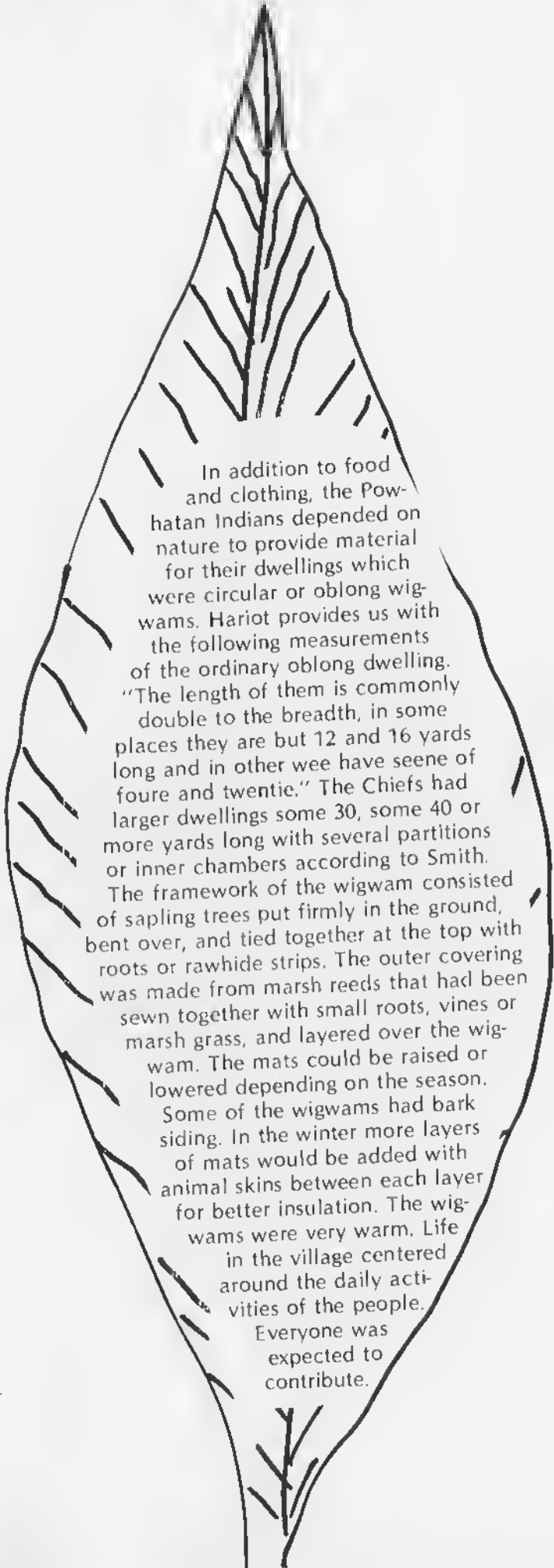


antler rakes, digging sticks and wooden hoes. Some of the crops were: corn, beans, squash, sunflower (for their seeds), pumpkin, gourds and peas.

Cooking was done outside over open fires. Food was also dried or smoked and stored on scaffolds or in pits for the winter months.

The men hunted and fished for deer, bear, turkey, rabbit, squirrel, scale fish, shellfish, and waterbirds which provided another important source of food.

The white tail deer was valuable to the Indians. In addition to the meat, nearly all parts of the deer were used. Antlers were made into rakes, knives, flaking tools and jewelry. Bones were sharpened into arrow-points, awls, needles, scrapes, and some were attached to wooden handles to make hoes. The tendons were stripped out to provide the strong sinew thread used for sewing leather and for lashing arrowheads to shafts for arrows. Hides were scraped with stone or shell tools and stretched across wooden frames. Deer brains were then rubbed into the leather to tan the hide so it could be used for clothing and moccasins.



In addition to food and clothing, the Powhatan Indians depended on nature to provide material for their dwellings which were circular or oblong wigwams. Hariot provides us with the following measurements of the ordinary oblong dwelling.

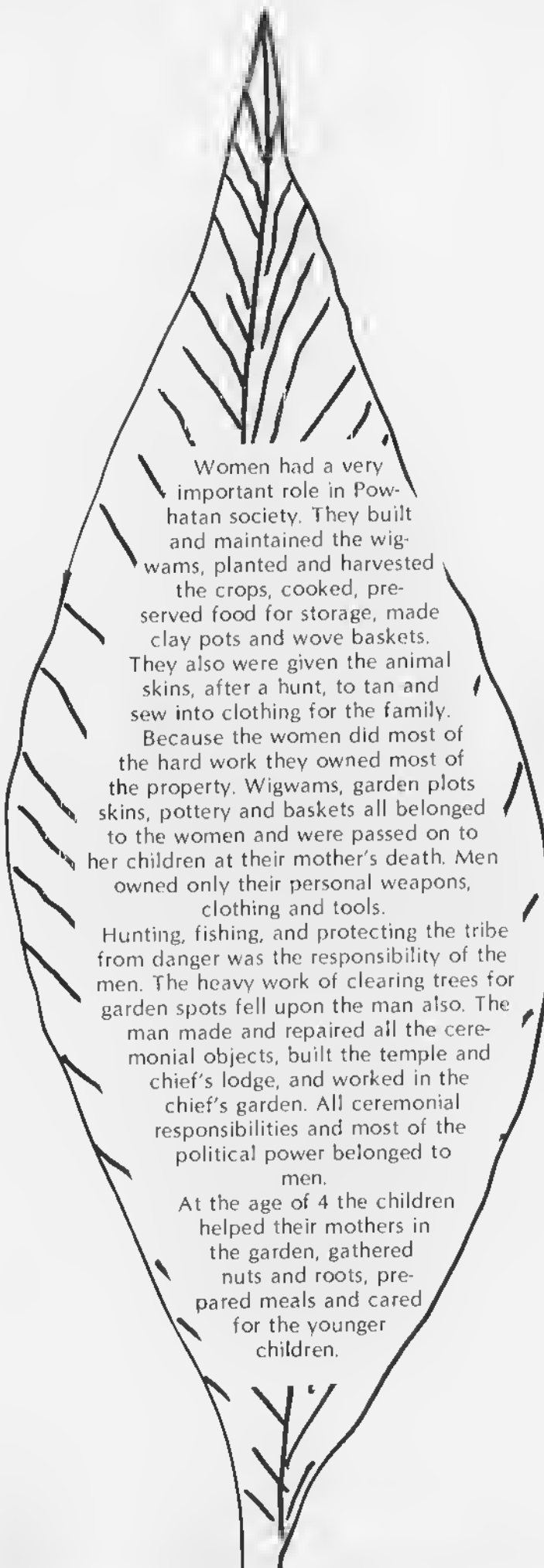
"The length of them is commonly double to the breadth, in some places they are but 12 and 16 yards long and in other we have seen of four and twenty." The Chiefs had larger dwellings some 30, some 40 or more yards long with several partitions or inner chambers according to Smith.

The framework of the wigwam consisted of sapling trees put firmly in the ground, bent over, and tied together at the top with roots or rawhide strips. The outer covering was made from marsh reeds that had been sewn together with small roots, vines or marsh grass, and layered over the wigwam. The mats could be raised or lowered depending on the season.

Some of the wigwams had bark siding. In the winter more layers of mats would be added with animal skins between each layer for better insulation. The wigwams were very warm. Life

in the village centered around the daily activities of the people.

Everyone was expected to contribute.

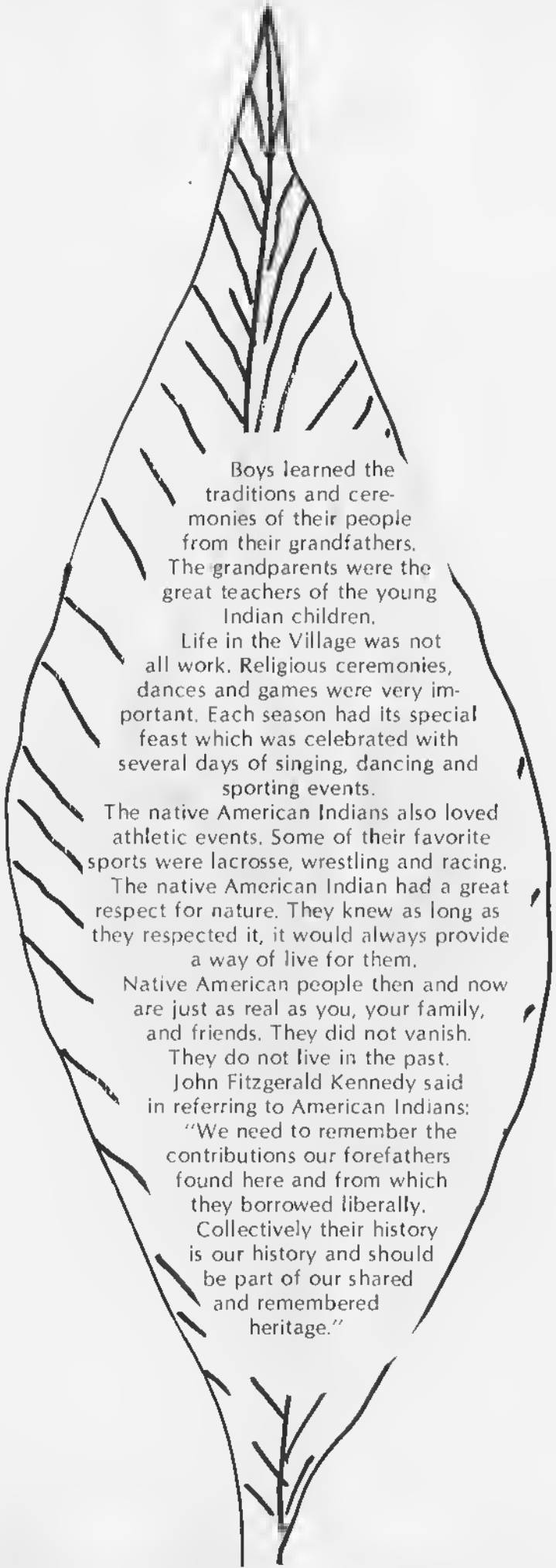


Women had a very important role in Powhatan society. They built and maintained the wigwams, planted and harvested the crops, cooked, preserved food for storage, made clay pots and wove baskets. They also were given the animal skins, after a hunt, to tan and sew into clothing for the family.

Because the women did most of the hard work they owned most of the property. Wigwams, garden plots, skins, pottery and baskets all belonged to the women and were passed on to her children at their mother's death. Men owned only their personal weapons, clothing and tools.

Hunting, fishing, and protecting the tribe from danger was the responsibility of the men. The heavy work of clearing trees for garden spots fell upon the man also. The man made and repaired all the ceremonial objects, built the temple and chief's lodge, and worked in the chief's garden. All ceremonial responsibilities and most of the political power belonged to men.

At the age of 4 the children helped their mothers in the garden, gathered nuts and roots, prepared meals and cared for the younger children.

A large, stylized leaf outline, oriented vertically with the stem at the bottom. The leaf has a central midrib and several pairs of secondary veins branching off. The text is centered within the leaf's outline.

Boys learned the traditions and ceremonies of their people from their grandfathers. The grandparents were the great teachers of the young Indian children.

Life in the Village was not all work. Religious ceremonies, dances and games were very important. Each season had its special feast which was celebrated with several days of singing, dancing and sporting events.

The native American Indians also loved athletic events. Some of their favorite sports were lacrosse, wrestling and racing.

The native American Indian had a great respect for nature. They knew as long as they respected it, it would always provide a way of live for them.

Native American people then and now are just as real as you, your family, and friends. They did not vanish.

They do not live in the past.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy said in referring to American Indians:

"We need to remember the contributions our forefathers found here and from which they borrowed liberally.

Collectively their history is our history and should be part of our shared and remembered heritage."

